

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Airports are an essential component of the communities they serve. While offering a fast, efficient, and safe method to move people and goods, airports also provide additional benefits. They are an important factor in influencing economic growth and development. In fact, many businesses cite proximity to an airport as a reason for locating in a particular area. Not only can airports generate economic benefits, but many companies not directly tied to aviation rely on airport services to support their daily business activities, further contributing to an area's economy.

With dwindling resources and ever-increasing demands for public works improvements, the true value of airports as economic tools must be assessed in order to provide decision makers with better information to make informed judgments.

This report quantifies the economic impacts of the public use airports in the Commonwealth of Virginia in the base year 2001, and describes the relationship between the airports and the Commonwealth's economy.

1.2 AIRPORT CLASSIFICATIONS AND LOCATION

At the time of this base year 2001 study, the Commonwealth had an extensive air transportation system organized in five classifications. The number of airports by Classification Category is shown in **Table 1.1**. In addition, a new airport opened in Stafford County in December 2001, and a replacement airport opened in Lee County in the year 2002. These facilities were not open during the study period and are not included in state impact totals. However, an estimate of their expected economic impact has been provided separately for informational purposes.

Table 1.1

Number of Airports by Classification Category in 2001

Classification	2001
Commercial Service	9
Reliever	7
General Aviation Regional	17
General Aviation Community	16
Local Service	17

The description provided below for each of the five classifications gives a general impression of the airport role and the type of facilities at each airport.

Commercial Service (CS). Commercial Service airports provide scheduled air carrier and/or commuter service to surrounding communities. Established Commercial Service airports are included in this category. If a noncommercial service airport acquires scheduled passenger service, it would qualify as a Commercial Service airport upon reaching 10,000 annual enplanements. Commercial Service airports should be developed at a minimum according to the Federal Aviation Administration Airport Reference Code (ARC)-Category “C” design criteria. A precision instrument approach should be provided if technically and economically feasible. Such airports are eligible to receive Air Carrier entitlement, as well as, Air Carrier/Reliever discretionary funding from the Commonwealth Airport Fund.

Reliever (RL). General aviation airports in metro areas intended to reduce congestion at large commercial service airports by providing general aviation pilots with comparable landside and airside facilities. To accommodate the full range of general aviation aircraft, reliever airports should be developed to ARC-C design criteria when feasible. A precision instrument approach should be provided if technically and economically feasible. Such airports are eligible for Air Carrier/Reliever discretionary funding from the Commonwealth.

General Aviation Regional (GR). Service areas for Regional airports are often multi-jurisdictional due to geographic isolation or the relative scarcity of other airport services and facilities. Regional airports serve a large market area. They provide a full range of aviation facilities and services to business and recreational users, including jet fuel, instrument approaches, full service fixed based operations, corporate hangars and GA terminal facilities. These airports should be developed to ARC-C category design criteria when feasible. A precision instrument approach should be provided if technically and economically feasible. Regional airports are eligible for General Aviation discretionary funding by the Commonwealth.

General Aviation Community (GC). These airports provide general aviation facilities and services to business and recreational users. Community airports typically serve their respective communities or a smaller market area. The services provided by Community airports typically include aircraft rental, flight training and AvGas sales. Community airports should be developed to ARC-B category design criteria. A non-precision instrument approach should be considered if technically and economically feasible and where justified by the level of operations. Community airports are eligible for General Aviation discretionary funding by the Commonwealth.

Local Service (LO). Local service airports are generally low activity facilities and provide limited general aviation facilities to their respective communities. These airports typically have development constraints which preclude substantial expansion. Such constraints include airspace conflicts, environmental concerns, topography, competing aeronautical services, surrounding land use patterns and ownership status. When technically and economically feasible, Local Service airports should be developed to an ARC A or B category design criteria. These airports are not eligible for Commonwealth funding except for safety and preservation projects. Local Service airports must meet minimum requirements for licensing in accordance with 5.1-7

of the Code of Virginia and 24 FAC 5-20-140 and may be in close proximity to larger airports in surrounding communities.

A detailed list of the Commonwealth’s classification of each public-use airport is provided in **Table 1.2**. Airport locations are shown in **Figure 1-1**.

Table 1.2

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Airport Classifications

Airport Name	Service Role
Charlottesville-Albemarle	CM
Lynchburg Regional	CM
Newport News-Williamsburg International	CM
Norfolk International	CM
Richmond International	CM
Roanoke Regional	CM
Ronald Reagan Washington National	CM
Shenandoah Valley Regional	CM
Washington Dulles International	CM
Chesapeake Regional	RL
Chesterfield County	RL
Hampton Roads	RL
Hanover County Municipal	RL
Leesburg Executive	RL
Manassas Regional	RL
Warrenton-Fauquier	RL
Accomack County	GR
Blue Ridge	GR
Culpeper County	GR
Danville Regional	GR
Dinwiddie County Airport	GR
Farmville Regional	GR
Ingalls Field	GR
Lonesome Pine	GR
Mecklenburg-Brunswick Regional	GR

Table 1.2 Continued

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Airport Classifications

Middle Peninsula Regional	GR
New River Valley	GR
Shannon	GR
Suffolk Municipal	GR
Tazewell County	GR
Virginia Highlands	GR
William M. Tuck	GR
Winchester Regional	GR
Blackstone Municipal	GC
Brookneal-Campbell County	GC
Emporia-Greenville Regional	GC
Franklin Municipal	GC
Front Royal-Warren County	GC
Louisa County	GC
Luray Caverns	GC
Marks Municipal	GC
Mountain Empire	GC
New Kent County	GC
Orange County	GC
Tangier Island	GC
Twin County	GC
Virginia Tech	GC
Wakefield Municipal	GC
Williamsburg-Jamestown	GC
Bridgewater Air Park	LO
Chase City Municipal	LO
Crewe Municipal	LO
Falwell	LO
Gordonsville Municipal	LO
Grundy Municipal	LO
Hartwood Field	LO
Hummel Field	LO
Lake Anna	LO
Lawrenceville-Brunswick	LO
Lee County (Pennington Gap)	LO
Lee County (Jonesville)	LO
Lunenburg County	LO
New London	LO
New Market	LO
Smith Mountain Lake	LO
Tappahannock Municipal	LO
Waynesboro	LO

Source: HNTB

Figure 1-1
2001 Virginia Airports

